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THE WEEK IN OTTAWA

ISN'T THIS TRUE

Listening from time to time to various honorable members, one would come to the conclusion that Canadians were poor people, said an MP in the House of Commons, "we hear so many arguments in favor of cheap food. I want to point out, however, that in 1947 Canadians spent $400,000,000 on alcoholic beverages, $275,000,000 on tobacco, and $120,000,000 on movies and cosmetics, which makes a total of about $795,000,000. In addition the governments paid some $230,000,000 in family allowances, which brings the total to nearly $100 a person. It would seem to me then, that people want subsidized food so they can afford luxuries and they want the farmer to bear the brunt of it.

"Canadians must be informed that it is not the farmer who is responsible for the increased cost of living, declared another MP in the House. "It is the spread between producer and consumer over which the farmer has no control that has he'ped to cause these high prices."

These are typical reactions along Parliament Hill and indicate the trend of thought, with there being little doubt about their significance as the man in the street across Canada becomes more and more concerned about the disappearing value of his dollar in the spectacular rise in the cost of living, especially food.

SHORT RECESS

The intention of the government is to ask for an adjournment on the afetrnoon of March 24th at 6 o'clock until the following March 30, as the Easter recess of the House of Commons, so that there will be a short recess.

HOUSING PROBLEM

It has been brought out in the House of Commons that the Government has had a strict control on the exports of building materials as well as a policy o ftrying to encourage producers and manufacturers to increase their output of such material granting even bonuses for the latter purpose and resulting in higher production.

Indeed, as illustrations of the effectiveness of this policy it has been made known here that production of building supplies moved up in all directions in the past year, including the following with the previous years output being given in brackets: lumber, 5 millions of bd.ft. (4¾) hot air furnaces, 56,000 units, (43,000), soil pipe and joints, 33,000 tons (26,000) cement 12,100,000 barrels (10,300,000) bricks 290 million (275); glass 70 thousands of sq.ft. (44); nails 78 thousands of tons (60); asphalt shingles 2,100 thousands of sq. bundles (2,100).

These figures speak for themselves and show clearly the rising tide in the production of building materials in aCnada where the only real setback in such production last year was suffered in steel pipe, the output of which was about 92,000 tons compared with 98,000 tons in the preceding year.

NO ENCOURAGEMENT

"All sorts of new newspaper enterprises start up", said Trade Minister Howe in Parliament in discussing the Governments control over imports during the present "Austerity" program. "We have already had applications from people who want to bring presses over to start printing pulp magazines in this country which is a type of project that I have said frequently we do not wish to encourage. This is merely to make sure that the money is spent for material that is useful to the Canadian economy".

INDUSTRIAL DEFENCE BOARD

The Government has indicated its intention to set up an industrial defence board for the purpose of advising the Government and the Minister of National Defence on matters relating to industrial organization, it is learned here, and it is expected that an announcement will be made in a few weeks time about it.

DISINCLINED TO DISCLOSE

The United Kingdom Government seems disinclined to allow the publication of telegrams connected with the international position in the Far East before the sending of British and Canadian forces to Hong Kong in 1941, it has been stated by Premier King. The British Government held that "the whole system of full and frank communication between Commonwealth Govenments would be prejudiced if telegrams of this nature had to be prepared on the basis that they might eventually be published."

MORE HOUSES AND LESS DESIGNS

The National Council of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada at its 41st annual assembly in Ottawa suggested that the demand is for more houses and not for more designs, adding that a house, under the minimum standards of the National Housing Act, "may not be a thing of beauty but it will be a joy for the period of its physical existence to people who are craving for a roof over their heads."

NARROW MAJORITIES

Some narrow majorities have been recorded in votes in the House of Commons here lately when the opposition was solid against the Government, including two votes of 102-92 on the third reading of the important Emergency Exchange Conservation Act and an amendment to confine the Act's application to so-called "hard currency" countries only defeated by 101 to 96 with these votes stressing the Governments present narrow overall majority of about nine votes.

SAID IN THE CAPITAL

"But I cannot bind the Government to any unconditional guarantee that all produce grown in Canada during 1948 will never have to face any competition from imported goods", said Finance Minister Abbott, offering a hint of possibilities.

"Under present conditions there is no such thing as low cost housing" declared Charles David, president of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, here

"Perhaps Canada in the future is destined to bridge the gap between the United States an dthe United Kingdom in economic as well as in political matters", said Senator Wishart Robertson, Government leader in the eSnate.

"Ottawa instructions to customs officers should be as palatable as possible and to remove all unnecessary bars concerning tourists entering and leaving Canada", remarked George R. Webb, MP, in a speech in the House of Commons.

"In Europe the time is ripe f some great step forward",, British author and lecturer Commander Stephen King-Hall told an audience here, revealing that Churchill, French leaders Blum and Herriot and Western European delegations will meet at the Hague on May 8 in a great "manifestation" for a United Europe.

"If we go on allowing the psychology of boom to continue undisturbed, we will get a bust", commented J. M. Macdonnell, MP, during a debate in the House.

Canadians are petroleum conscious because, with the sole exception of their cousins to the south, they use oil per capital more than any other people in the world", stated John Ness, geologist and official of the Imperial Oil Company., Ltd. in his speech to the Engineering Institute of Canada in this aCpital:

WEEKLY WIND-UP

For the second time in 1948 the Ban kof Canada reduced its support of Dominion bonds but indicated in a statement here that the Bank "does not regard the increase in rates of interest which has taken p'ace as one of the most important factors in combatting a general rise in price levels." The bank even stated that it is "not in favor of a drastic increase in interest rates.

The Governor General, Viscount Alexander, told the Academy of Medicine here that the evacuation of the wounded by air during the war deserved special praise since it raised the morale of the troops to know that, if wounded they would beflown speedily back to hospital.

A combined air force formed by all the smaller nations of Europe would be the only way to discourage aggression by other countries, urged the Famous French Flier, Henri Bouche addressing a meeting here, with M. Bouche being French a representative in the International Civil Aviation Organization Council.

Vancouvers Mayor Charles Jones paid his first official visit to this capital and it is understood that he discussed with gofficials matters pertaining to his city taking over the Government-operated airport at Sea Island used by the RCAF during the war.

The Senate Tourist Committee was told by an official of the Canadian Government that only 15% of the United States Tourists stay three days or more when visiting Canada, though they spend 83% of the over-all amount of tourist money.

It is estimated that at least 30,000 Orangemen will concentrate here when a two-day celebration takes place in this Capital in July 1948.

The Canadian Government does not anticipate saving U.S. dollars on imports of steel under its conservation program, though pe mits would be required for steel imports to make sure it was used in the type of construction wanted under the program.

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